

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 MC-02 ACDA-05 /084 W

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R 101445Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4951

INFO AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS UNN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

RUFHROXAMEMBASSY ROME 973

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0162

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TS, LU

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO LUXEMBOURG

SUMMARY: ON A SWING THROUGH EUROPE, TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER
HABIB CHATTY SPENT FEBRUARY 6 AND 7 IN LUXEMBOURG.

MAIN PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO DISCUSS EEC/TUNISIAN ASSOCIATION
AGREEMENT, WHICH TUNISIANS FIND DISSATISFACTORY IN COMPARISON
WITH ALGERIAN ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT. LUXEMBOURGERS WERE SYMPATHETIC
TO TUNISIAN POINT OF VIEW. CHATTX ALSO DISCUSSED
SITUATION IN LEBANON WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS PRECARIOUS,
SAID THAT MAJOR PROBLEM IN THE SAHARA IS TO FIND A FACE-SAVING
DEVICE TO COVER ALGERIAN BACKING-OFF, AND URGED A MORE EEC
FLEXIBILITY IN DISCUSSING POLITICAL ISSUES IN EURO-ARAB

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DIALOGUE. END SUMMARY

1. TUNISIA/EEC: MFA SECRETARY GENERAL PIERRE WURTH BRIEFED DCM ON CHATTY VISIT. HE SAID CHATTX EXPRESSED STROMG DISSATISFACTION BECAUSE IN EEC ASSOCIATION AGREEMENTS ALGERIA GOT A BETTER DEAL THAN TUNISIA ON CITRUS FRUITS AND WINE. ALTHOUGH COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS ARE IMPORTANT, WURTH BELIEVES THE PROBLEM IS LARGELY POLITICAL. THE ALGERIANS HAVE APPARENTLY CONTENTED THAT THEIR TOUGHER NEGOTIATING STANCE WON MORE FAVORABLE AGREEMENT, TO THE ANNOYANCE AND EMBARRASSMENT OF THE TUNISIANS (AND FOR THAT MATTER THE MOROCCANS). WURTH ADDED THAT PRIME MIMISTER THORN FEELS THE COMMISSION MADE A SERIOUS NEGOTIATING MISTAKE WITH THE ALGERIANS AND THAT SOMETHING WILL HAVE TO BE DONE TO MOLLIFY THE TUNISIANS AND THE MOROVCONS. WURTH CAUTIONED THAT THE DIFFICULTIES OF MAKING ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS ON CITRUS AND WINE SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATEB, BUT SAID SOME BALANCE OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONCESSIONS TO TUNISIA AND MOROCCO WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE FOUND.

2. ON LEBANON, WURTH SAID THAT CHATTY CHARACTERIZED THE CURRENT SITUATION AS EXTREMELY PRECARIOUS AND EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT THE CEASE-FIRE COULD HOLD. THE LEBANESE GOVEGNMENT'S COMPLETE INABILITY TO CONTROL THE LARGELY IRRESPONSIBLE PRIVATE ARMIES THAT HAVE TAKEN ROOT ON BOTH SIDES IS THE BASIS FOR CHATTY'S PESSIMISM.

3. ON THE SAHARA PROBLEM, WURTH SAID CHATTY LEFT NO DOUBT TMAT TUNISIA WAS 100 PERCENT ON MOROCCO'S SIDE. ACCORDING TO CHATTY'S ANALYSIS, THE ALGERIANS COMPLETELY MISCONCEIVED THE SPANISH INTENTIONS AND DOUBTED SPAIN'S WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO. BASED ON THEIR FAULTY ANALYSIS, THE ALGERIANS GOT IN TOO DEEP AND ARE NOW HAVING DIFFICULTIES EXTRACATING THEMSELVES. A FACE-SAVING FORMULA IS NEEDED FOR ALGERIA. ALTHOUGH CHATTY ADMITTED THAT HE PERSONALLY KNEW OF NO MIRACLE SOLUTION. PARTICULARLY ALARMING FROM THE TUNISIAN POINT OF VIEW, CHATTY ADDED, IS THE LARGE FLOW OF SOVIET ARMS TO ALGERIA AND FRENCH ARMS TO
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MOROCCO.

4. ON THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE, WURTH SAID CHATTY ARGUED STRONGLY THAT THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE MORE FLEXIBLE ON POLITICAL DISCUSSION. CHATTY CONTENTED THAT ECONOMIC. CULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL TIES WERE ALL FINE, BUT TO BE MEANINGFUL THESE HAB TO BE IN A CONTEXT OF PEACEFUL, FRIENDLY RELATIONS. SINCE THE QUEST FOR PEACE IS A POLITICAL QUESTION, CHATTY DOES NOT SEE HOW THE EUROPEANS CAN CONTINUE TO EXCLUDE ALL DISCUSSION OF POLITICS FROM

THE DIALOGUE. WURTH SAID TMORN IN REPLY REITERATED
THE LONG-STANDING EEC POSITION THAT THE COMMUNITY WOULD
GO NO FURTHER POLITICALLY IN THE DIALOGUE THAN ITS
PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO DATE ON THE MIDDLE EAST. FARKAS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LUXEMB00162
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760051-0168
From: LUXEMBOURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760264/aaaaceie.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <03 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO LUXEMBOURG SUMMARY: ON A SWING THROUGH EUROPE, TUNISIAN FOREIGN MINISTER
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, TS, LU, (CHATTY, HABIB)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006